

## Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01 MC-02 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 ARAE-00

AID-05 IGA-02 TRSE-00 EB-07 COME-00 /074 W

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O 271550Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9462

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 0760

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR BL

SUBJECT: REGIONAL STUDY ON CONVENTIONAL ARMS SUPPLY  
RESTRAINTS

REF: STATE 015423

1. REPLY TO REFTEL AS REQUESTED.

2. PARA 2, ITEMS 1, 2 AND 3. FOR BOLIVIA, THE MAJOR FACTORS AFFECTING REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT ARE THE DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MAY TAKE PLACE IN ITS EFFORTS TO OBTAIN AN OUTLET TO THE PACIFIC. IF THESE ARE NOT SUCCESSFUL, TENSIONS IN THE REGION, ESPECIALLY BETWEEN CHILE AND PERU WOULD TEND TO INCREASE, THEREBY INCREASING THE OBSTACLES TO ARMS RESTRAINT IN THE REGION. A SOVEREIGN CORRIDOR SEPARATING THE TWO COUNTRIES, WITH SOME AGREEMENT TO DEVELOP THE AREA FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL THREE COUNTRIES SHOULD LESSEN TENSIONS AND IMPROVE CHANCES FOR ARMS RESTRAINT. ONE OF THE CONDITIONS POSED BY CHILE IN ITS OFFER OF A SOVEREIGN CORRIDOR TO BOLIVIA IS THE DEMILITARIZATION OF THE CORRIDOR. THIS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO BOLIVIA AS A CONDITION, BUT MAY BE A POINT FOR NEGOTIATION IN THE FUTURE IN  
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CONJUNCTION WITH A PULL-BACK FROM THE FRONTIERS BY BOTH

PERU AND CHILE. ITEM 4. BOLIVIA PROBABLY WOULD WELCOME A MEANINGFUL INITIATIVE FAVORING REGIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT WAS LEAD BY THE U.S. OR SOME OTHER COUNTRY OR GROUP. BOLIVIA RESPONDED WELL TO THE PERUVIAN INITIATIVE FOR ARMS LIMITATION, FOLLOWING THE AYACUCHO DECLARATION EVEN THOUGH THE PERUVIAN INITIATIVE WAS REGARDED BY SOME AS CYNICAL. ITEM 5. THE MOST FEASIBLE RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENTS FOR BOLIVIA WOULD BE CEILINGS ON TYPE AND QUANTITY OF WEAPONS AND TROOP LEVELS FOR COUNTRIES IN THE REGION, WHICH WOULD NOT PREVENT ITS OWN ABILITY TO MODERNIZE (GIVEN ITS PRESENT LOW STATE OF PREPAREDNESS) AND FULLY EQUIP FORCES SUFFICIENT TO GUARANTEE INTERNAL SECURITY. BOLIVIA IS NOT PREPARED TO POSTPONE MODERNIZATION OF ITS FORCES PENDING A REGIONAL ARMS AGREEMENT.

3. PARA 3 AND 4. ASSUMING THAT ARMS RESTRAINT IS RELATED TO THE EXTENT OF INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL THREAT FELT BY EACH NATION, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE U.S. AND OTHERS IN THE REGION ENDORSE THEIR COMMITMENTS UNDER THE RIO TREATY, AND THAT THE U.S. STRESS ITS CONTINUED DESIRE TO ENGAGE IN JOINT HEMISPHERIC DEFENSE MANEUVERS AND ARRANGEMENTS WITH KEY COUNTRIES IN THE AREA. IN ADDITION, THE U.S. SHOULD RESPOND REASONABLY TO REASONABLE GOB REQUESTS FOR ARMS. SINCE THE U.S. REMAINS A SOURCE (FREQUENTLY PREFERRED) OF SUPPLY FOR ARMS OUR POTENTIAL FOR INFLUENCING THE GOB IN ARMS RESTRAINT COULD BE ENHANCED BY U.S. COMMERCIAL SALES EVEN IF CONGRESS SHOULD TERMINATE OR DRASTICALLY REDUCE FOREIGN SECURITY ASSISTANCE WITHIN THE NEXT FEW YEARS. STEDMAN

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